December 18, 2020
Issue #34

**Artist**
**Anna Szafranski**

# The Crazy Wisdom Weekly

# *shining a light in the dark*

Published by the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* during the Pandemic.

Photo by Luke Stackpoole on Unsplash

# The Crazy Wisdom Weekly

Listen to the interview with Crazy Wisdom's co-owner, Bill Zirinsky, on Art & Soul with Lisa Barry.

[Art & Soul: Well Being - Crazy Wisdom Bookstore Is Oasis For People Searching In Their Lives]

## The Crazy Wisdom Weekly is looking for your submissions!

We want short stories, personal essays, gardening tips, reflections on life, your best recipies, or awesome summer wildlife or nature photos! Have a great joke? Send it in! We are also looking to feature local authors, writers, musicians, craftspeople, and artists. Have a great idea for a short article? Send in your article pitch! Submissions should be sent to: Jennifer@crazywisdom.net. Please put CW Weekly submission in the subject line. Articles should be no more than 1000 words.

We look forward to seeing your submissions!

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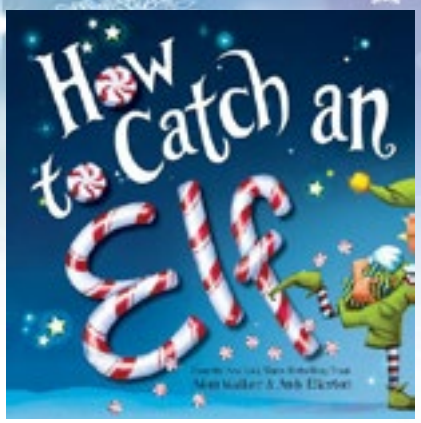


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Thank you to our contributors for this issue:

Michele McLemore
Heidi Mae Wolf
Peggy River Singer
Madeline Strong Diehl
Cathy Houlihan
Anna Szafranski
Carol Karr
Jennifer Carson
Bill Zirinsky

## Word of the Week:

### Boun

To boun something is to decorate it with evergreen branches during the Christmas period.

Born during the pandemic, *The Crazy Wisdom Weekly* seeks to represent the voices of our community in a timely and entertaining manner. We welcome articles, interviews, recipes, wisdom, personal essays, breathing exercises, beautiful art and photos, favorite places for socially distant walks, news of your pets, or musings on current events. Send your submission to Jennifer@crazywisdom.net.

# Expectations and Holidaze

By Michelle McLemore

In 2014 my husband's nephew committed suicide and we were to host Christmas. The shock hung heavy and it felt almost disrespectful to do Christmas as normal. I didn't have the heart to put up a full tree and space was limited anyhow. To make an effort, we obtained a three-foot tree and suspended it from the ceiling, upside down, over a table. To me, it addressed the space concern, was a respectful, subtle decoration attempt, and symbolized how upside down everyone felt. We hoped it might make family be able to smile for a moment. Naturally, it was a more somber gathering than prior years, but we gathered because people need to gather.

2017 my father passed away.
2018 my uncle committed suicide. My husband had triple bypass. And my only brother died unexpectedly despite his wife and I giving him CPR.
2019 my mother passed in January. It would take a year and a half to sort, pitch, clean, and sell the family farm.

2019 was the first Thanksgiving that both of my parents, and a brother, were no longer with us. The weeks leading to it, I couldn't foresee any way to celebrate to any normalcy. So, we went out to eat. Masses of people sat at long tables and took turns at the buffet in a hotel conference room. It was awkwardness and isolation wrapped among a sea of strangers. We "participated" in the motions of the cultural holiday and yet, felt no peace or joy from it. What had been a well-intentioned "attempt" turned into a farce. We vowed not to do that again. Then came 2020. With it, we have all been given an abundance of time to examine our expectations about life. What is our personal measure of a successful day? A joyous moment?

Expectations can ruin a good experience if things don't go precisely as planned. Expectations can also dampen the growth and richness of a new experience by expecting it to be fruitless.
It isn't denial, problems do arise and exist. It is a conscious choice to not capitulate to the shadows of despair. Breathe. Live in grace and joy while you are here. I've lived through my seasons of ill health and grief. There may be more in the future. To not celebrate when one can, is fool-hardy and to throw contempt at the Universe which granted this reprieve…or granted this time to celebrate the growth you have already experienced from prior tribulations.

This year, for Thanksgiving,  I threw a turkey protest and celebration of life. Family comfortable with sharing space attended. Everyone in attendance understood that no one would intentionally infect anyone else, nor would we hold grudges or call anyone heartless if by chance an infection occurred. No day is promised and thus, many of my family chose not to squander quality of life for length of a life. For as I led with, we have known death up close and personal. We deeply understood what was at stake. Choosing to live, to laugh, to create, is not a sign of disrespect to the deceased nor to the ill nor frail. Frailty and death is as part of life as birth and growth. Some of the most beautiful moments of my life were tending to my aged mother before her passing. And the most humbling time of my life was when I was graced by crippling pain and dependent upon my husband for care. There is much to learn and appreciate in every life stage. And each stage brings new purpose and possibilities of contribution to humanity and the universality which connect us all.

The upside-down tree is still hanging—for Thanksgiving it sported harvest decorations: glittered leaves, acorns, and cardinals for each family member or friend who flies high. I wrapped the banister, adorned the table, and sprinkled gratitude throughout the corners of each room. This Thanksgiving I chose to gather every kernel of joy-potential and was open to simply Be among whomever came near and in whatever capacity each could be present. I chose to provide a warm environment decorated with love and with peace breathed through every aspect.
At intervals, individuals stepped outside on the patio to send off a prayer/wish into the firmament. Each stood silently watching his or her tissue paper plea lighted by a match, rise up, and was borne aloft on the slight breeze.

How will we celebrate Christmas? We will open our hearts and home again, to any one who desires a communal gathering. I will not give energy to the potential of family tension, of dishes going awry, or the potential of headaches. There is no pay off in those "what ifs." The flow of togetherness doesn't have to be micro-managed by a time-table for forced family activities. I recognize that individuals need spaces and places to be by themselves at times to reground. I will prepare my home to the best I can to be a haven and continuously prepare my heart as the best gift I can offer.

Loving without expectation is safe and beautiful and satisfying. You don't owe anyone an explanation and anyone who attempts to keep a tab can only understand conditional love at this time. Simply BE and your presence and behavior will add to the love ripples across our world.

After all, at the end of it all, our emotions and our memories are all we take with us. What do you want to carry into the beyond? I choose Love not anxiety. I choose gratitude versus blame. I choose acceptance of all versus judgement. And most of all? I choose to celebrate in whatever capacity I can, every moment of every day. Set your intention not your expectation. Prepare your heart and only after that prepare the table.

# Therapeutic Writing and The Power of Storytelling: *Healing and Hope is Within Our Grasp*

By Madeline Strong Diehl

It's not surprising that, at a time of intense free-floating anxiety and the most divisive political atmosphere in decades, if not generations, America's mental health crisis is out-of-control.

The numbers of people suffering from anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders were already alarming before the pandemic came along. According to an August 2020 report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of people with anxiety symptoms tripled, and the number with depression symptoms quadrupled,5 compared to a 2019 survey.

People from every class, race, education level, and ethnicity are all experiencing an unprecedented level of stress in what psychologists call "mass trauma." No one is immune to either the virus or the emotional overload of trying to elude it. Some psychologists are saying that our current situation is worse than almost every other crisis our nation has faced because there is no particular date we can point to as the beginning of our collective story.
It's almost impossible not to feel hopeless in light of all this, but a December 2020 article in Scientific American spells out many ways we can take charge over our lives, and all of them are within the grasp of most people, if we just give them a try.

The article shares advice from experts on how we can manage our emotions and our stress and maintain our equilibrium through day after day of uncertainty. One of the biggest pieces of advice is not to "engage with a great deal of media." People who do, according to one researcher, "are more likely to exhibit and report distress, (and) that distress seems to draw them further into the media."

Another researcher advises we "maintain healthy sleep, exercise, food, and drink habits." He also suggests keeping a journal to help us process our feelings and experiences. Using journaling as a tool to help us maintain our mental, emotional, and physical health is called "therapeutic writing." More than two hundred scientific studies confirm that writing can help relieve stress and boost our immune system.

What, exactly, is "expressive writing?" Also called "therapeutic writing," "narrative therapy," and other terms, it's a way to relieve emotional and psychological stress by finding a way to write about our experiences as the hero of our own lives—not as a victim. Writing can also help us process complicated emotions and situations.

I have been keeping a journal since I was eight years old, and that practice has carried over into what is now a 30+-year career as a journalist, writer, and editor. I come from a military family where my father's work was top-secret: he drove around in a nuclear submarine, sneaking into ports in the Soviet Union and spying on their shipbuilding activities. If he had been caught, he probably would have been put in prison for a long time. Our mother was all too cognizant of this danger, and her anxiety, depression, and helplessness clouded our home environment during the six months out of every year when our father was out on patrol. Our mother was essentially raising five children alone, and she was not up to the task. My siblings were all much older than me, so I was left to my own devices. The only time I felt happy and hopeful was when I confided all my feelings, confusion, and observations in my journal, usually writing by flashlight under my bed. It gave me a sense of agency, like I had some control over my life. It gave me a sense of hope that my life wouldn't always be that way.

I see now that it was probably inevitable that my early environment and parenting would result in a diagnosis of mental illness somewhere down the line. I finally told a doctor about all the anxiety and depression I was feeling at the age of 32, and I wished I had done it a lot sooner. Of course, I was scared to do it because of all the social stigma, not to mention I was raised to be stoic and suppress all my feelings.

I discovered that my mental health got better and more stable the more I told people about my diagnosis. And often, when I told someone, they responded by saying: "You know, I think I have that, too. You're helping me see that maybe I can get some relief if I talk to my doctor about it."

Increasingly, I was called upon to present talks about mental illness in the Ann Arbor community, and about four years ago I was invited to give a public reading from an essay that was published in an anthology called Show Me All Your Scars:

True Stories of Living with Mental Illness. (The anthology was published by InFact Books, an imprint of Creative Nonfiction magazine.) The essay contained details from my worst episode of bipolar illness, when I came closest to trying to take my own life. I was terrified to read it, and I kept hoping my family would give me an "out," but they were totally supportive instead. Afterward a young woman came up to me and told me that she had cut her mother out of her life because she acted so erratically, and my essay helped her understand her mother better. She said she planned to get in touch with her mom again as a result. Another listener said he had the same symptoms I had described, and now planned to see a doctor. One by one, listeners affirmed for me that I had done the right thing by sharing my story. Finally, a social worker from the Ann Arbor VA Hospital asked me if I would lead a writing workshop for veterans. Because I had not been able to help my father heal from his trauma before he died, I jumped at this chance to help other veterans.

The workshop was based at the VA Hospital's VEAR program (Veterans Empowerment and Recovery), and it was so successful with the veterans there that I ended up designing and teaching a total of eight sessions during the winter of 2016-17. I designed a curriculum that combined everything I knew about writing with a lifetime of using my writing to maintain my mental health; heal from trauma; and reach toward my dreams. After the workshop, the head therapist told me my recovery curriculum was better than anything she had seen during her 30-year career, and she and my co-facilitator encouraged me to lead writing workshops as my main vocation. Now, after teaching dozens of workshops, I know that everyone has the strength inside themselves to tell the stories of their lives as heroes, and this is the key to healing, recovering from trauma, and reaching toward our life goals. When we find ourselves in challenging times, this is also the key to hope.

It may seem like a stretch of the imagination to think about our dreams right now. It may seem like a stretch to think we can find hope, but if we can tell our life's story as an active hero who is in control of the decisions we make, and not as a victim, we can still dream. We can still hope.

Ida Tarbell, a woman who is considered to be the mother of investigative journalism, brought down some of the most corrupt and mighty institutions of her time, simply by telling stories, and speaking truth to power. There is no doubt that she changed the world many times over, and she did not give up just because it was hard or because she got tired. She said: "Imagination is the only key to the future. Without it, none exists. With it, all things are possible."

You can find suggestions on my website for how to establish and practice a therapeutic writing practice on your own. I am not a licensed therapist, so if you find that writing and journaling are causing you to feel more distressed or anxious, stop right away and look for a therapist to work with you.

Find a health care provider or treatment for substance use disorder and mental health through SAMHSA's National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357) and TTY 1-800-487-4889.

*Madeline Strong Diehl will lead a 10-session weekly therapeutic writing workshop for military veterans from mid-January through March 2021, with the help of a grant from the Jackson Family Social Welfare Fund, an endowment managed by the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor. For more information, please see her website.*

## Other Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions. Get immediate help in a crisis:

- Call 911
- Disaster Distress Helplineexternal icon: CALL or TEXT 1-800-985-5990 (press 2 for Spanish).
- National Suicide Prevention Lifelineexternal icon: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish, or Lifeline Crisis Chatexternal icon.
- National Domestic Violence Hotlineexternal icon: 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522
- National Child Abuse Hotlineexternal icon: 1-800-4AChild (1-800-422-4453) or text 1-800-422-4453
- National Sexual Assault Hotlineexternal icon: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or Online Chatexternal icon
- The Eldercare Locatorexternal icon: 1-800-677-1116 TTY Instructionsexternal icon
- Veteran's Crisis Line
- 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text: 8388255

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# 5 questions for artist Anna Szafranski

**Tell me about Vagabond Artists Collective. What was the impetus to starting this group?**

We created Vagabond Artists Collective to provide opportunities for local, and mostly student, artists to display and show their work. Applying to shows and galleries can be scary and intimidating, so we wanted to give those students an opportunity to showcase their work in a fun and more relaxed environment. Ultimately, we believe that in doing what we love, with the people we love, we can accomplish a life full of happiness, and the courage it takes to do it. Together we create art, and together that art wanders.

**What art medium do you use most and why is it your favorite?**

I use a variety of different clay bodies to create my ceramic work. I love the versatility it creates, and the initial struggle it presented challenged and pushed me in a direction I never saw coming. I'm most interested in making utilitarian pieces which function in our daily life, and I enjoy making objects that can be held, touched, used, and enjoyed. I'm intrigued with how the different forms and shapes function in a variety of ways and how those influences alter peoples' interaction, or reaction, to them.

**You use a lot of geometrics in your art. What draws you to this style?**

With a background and degree in Graphic Design, I've always been interested and drawn to a simple and clean design. I've played around and experimented with different patterns and designs, but the diamond pattern is one that I find aesthetically and visually appealing.

**Why do you think art is important during this time of upheaval in our country?**

Art is personal, but it's also universal, and everywhere you go art is present. Whether it's a painting, music, theatre, or your favorite coffee mug, art has a huge impact on our moods and emotions. Art is meant to make you feel something, bringing joy and interaction, with the hope of making us feel happier, calmer, and inspired.

**What role do you believe artists serve in society?**

First and foremost, I believe an artists role is to be true to themselves as much as possible within society. Similar to the question before, art can express the emotions and struggles of the society where it exists, and inspires communities to cope and even overcome. Art is not just a way to express, it's how we have communicated, celebrated, recorded, and described our lives since the beginning of time. It shares happiness with the world today, and it will continue in the future. Modern society brings modern issues, therefore, we need creative thinkers to keep moving us forward and making steps toward social progress.

Learn more about Anna and her at on her website, annaszafranski.com.

# Every THING Has a Voice!

by Peggy River Singer

I found this little six-inch Christmas tree at a dollar store, the perfect size for my small apartment. When switched on, it changes colors and is very soothing to look at.

I've been practicing and broadening my telepathic abilities, and since the little tree was right in front of me on my desk one day, I decided to try connecting with it...

River: So, my sparkling little friend, is there anything you'd like to talk about?

LCT: [pause] Me?

River: Yes.

LCT: Really?

River: Of course! If you would rather not, that's okay too. It's up to you.

LCT: I just... I don't know how to express it. Surprised. Good. Feels very good. A little dizzy even, with the implications. I may speak to a human and be understood. What a BIG idea! I think I'm excited!

River: Good for you! Life is more interesting with some excitement from time to time.

LCT: Whew! Okay! I would like to say that this is a stupendous opportunity that I scarcely know how to value or appreciate.

River: You are very welcome.

LCT: I can say more?

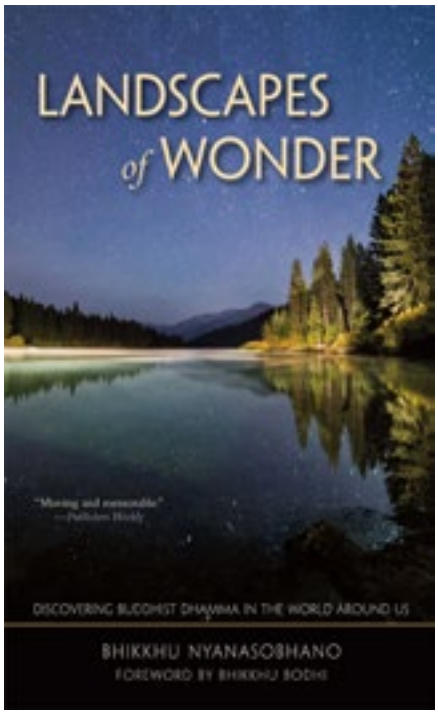
River: Surely!

LCT: I must [meditate, think] about this, it is swirling all around me. Wonderful swirling happy energy! I shall say I am done for now, and thank you.

River: Then I'll say goodnight, and thank YOU for speaking to me.

Read the rest of the conversation online!

## Crazy Wisdom Book Pick of the Week




*Landscapes of Wonder*
by Bhikkhu Nyanasobhano

"To most of us there have come exceptional, unworldly moments, like unsuspected deeps in a stream, when we fell through appearances - fell through ourselves - into an intuition of majesty and wonder."
- Bhikkhu Nyanasobhano in Landscapes of Wonder

Landscapes of Wonder deftly transports the spirit of Buddhist contemplation off the cushion and into the natural world. With a lyricism and spiritual immediacy reminiscent of Thoreau and Emerson, in eighteen meditational essays Bhikkhu Nyanasobhano considers Buddhist themes through the prism of nature. The reflections captured in these satisfying literary explorations will appeal to all who appreciate contemplation of the natural world and our place in it.

Purchase your copy of *Landscapes of Wonder* at shopcrazywisdom.com.

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The winter issue of *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* is coming! With articles on holistic practitioner Karlta Zarley, the kindness of trees, cashiering during a pandemic, artist David Zinn, and the Importance of Honoring Our Ancestors. You don't want to miss it!

Art by David Zinn

White Lotus FARMS
thank you
When Covid-19 turned our lives upside down this march, people came together at our farm and found a way to have joy in a time of hardship. We are honored to be a place where so many of you have come to find refuge and serenity.
Thank you to our fellow farmers and food makers who came through when supplies were scarce in stores. Together we showed we could nourish our people when they needed it most.
Thank you to everyone who came out to support us and all of the local businesses who make up the fabric of our community. We built a lot of new friendships that will endure after this is over.
Marrow, MI Farm to Freezer, Tantre Farms, U-M Campus Farm, Two Tracks Acres, Bay Port Fish Co., Detroit Mushroom Co., Go! Ice Cream, The Brinery, Roos Roast, Bee Sweet, J. Patrice Chocolate, Beau Bien, Boochy Mama, Neu Kombucha, Kuntry Gardens, Juicy Kitchen, Chef G, Tiffin Tonight, Panda Moon, Aunt Née's, Hummus Goodness, Nemeth Orchards, Green Things Farm Collective, Goetz, Sunburst Blooms, Hey Honey, Sherry's Pies, Whitney Farms, Shetlers, Pine Ridge Organics, Purple Bee Farms, Walnut Ridge, Honey Bee Farms, Why Not Pie, and many more...
White Lotus FARMS
whitelotusfarms.com
7217 w. Liberty, Ann Arbor

# Cohousing & Covid-19: Finding Community and Comfort

By Cathy Houlihan

Cohousing . . . No, it's not a hippie commune or a kibbutz and it's not cohabitating with a roommate. The concept originated in the mid-sixties in Denmark by Jan Gudmand-Hoyer. In Denmark it was called *bofaelleskab* (living community). In North America it was introduced as cohousing by two American architects, Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett. It's the idea of an intentional community of private homes or condo's clustered around a shared space. The intent is to create a friendly, open neighborhood where children can run and play freely on common grounds and its residents can use common spaces for shared meals, meetings, and casual gatherings.

Touchstone is one such community. The neighborhood sits on acreage surrounded by open fields and wooded vistas and are near Great Oaks and Sunward, two other cohousing communities. Touchstone Cohousing calls itself "an intergenerational community that helps break down the isolation that can be typical of suburban developments." Its residents are young families, single professionals, retirees, and octogenarians. There are approximately 80 residents living in Touchstone. According to the community's website, all Touchstone townhouse units have front porches and kitchens facing the community. Living rooms and most bedrooms have views of fields or natural landscapes. Some face a courtyard, so you can wave to neighbor or watch your children play. This layout allows residents to balance the need for solitary time with the joy of group experiences. The people who live in this special place always seem willing to help.

Need a ride to the airport? Someone to pick up a few groceries or a prescription? Help walking your pet? All you need to do is ask. The residents stay connected through a group email list. They also garden and cook together (pre-Covid19), maintain the grounds, and plenary meetings are held at the moment on Zoom to keep people aware of community plans, or immediate needs that have cropped up. There's also a conflict resolution group to settle disputes between neighbors. Everyone pitches in by donating 4-5 hours per month to a specific chore. There are cooks needed, maintenance to be done, grass to cut and one group focuses on the safety and play spaces for the children.

Cohousing has become an increasingly popular option for home buyers in Ann Arbor. and twelve new units are under construction now at Touchstone (hopefully to be finished in late winter). Pre-pandemic the community encouraged new folks to learn about its unique lifestyle through its tours, meetings, and information sessions. This helped ensure the integration of like-minded people to support the community's ideals and help foster social networks. Residents also find comfort in the additional safety provided by living in a dynamic, interactive setting that promotes social ties.

During the corona virus you can visit the co-housing website and take virtual tours to find out more information about living in the community. Lee, who has lived in three units in the Touchstone community puts it this way, "As a single woman it gives me a strong sense of security knowing that I have neighbors who know and care about me. Someone is always willing to lend a helping hand and even a shoulder to cry on."

"Spontaneous invitations for breakfast; a neighbor making me dinner and delivering it when I return home late from work; sitting around a bonfire roasting marshmallows; being able to say 'help my computer is down' and my neighbor stops by. Even sending out a message asking for a walking buddy and receiving ten responses" is what makes Robin happy living in the community. Now, more than ever during the Covid-19 pandemic, the community has stepped up efforts to help its residents. Dee shared these thoughts: "I am 76 years old and live alone with my cat (there's a reason behind stereotypes!). Although I have lived in cohousing (two different communities) for 20 years, I have never experienced such togetherness [than I have] here at Touchstone. We call it physical distancing, rather than social distancing, because there's plenty of support socially."

Touchstone and other communities have set up shopping plans for multi-family grocery buying, which limits the number of people going into stores and assists seniors or the more vulnerable. Touchstone Cares is a group that sends out birthday, anniversary greetings, and new baby announcements. When there were shelter in place orders, the group expanded and conducted twice daily check-ins by email or a FaceTime buddy for those living alone.

Some of the pandemic efforts at Touchstone underway: decorating a few of their internal roadways with bright painted designs that includes a kid's obstacle course, and shows examples of six-foot spacing to help visualize physical distancing. They later plan to paint markings that will separate pedestrian areas from bicycles and scooters. A dedicated group is sewing masks for healthcare workers, and the Touchstone community invested in Zoom Room so that games, like Scattegories, can help keep people connected. There's even a BYO wine meet up (physical distanced observed and weather permitting) to talk and share stories in the courtyard.

Touchstone and other cohousing communities appear to be a good place to stay safe during the Covid-19 pandemic. So many people are looking outside themselves to a greater good by staying focused on what matters. . . their families and neighbors.

Learn more about Touchstone and cohousing at touchstonecohousing.org.

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From Our Blog

# Amplifying Your Intentions with Prosperity Grids

*A crystal grid can amplify your intention with energy that directly resonates with prosperity and attracts like energy in return.*

By Heidi Mae Wolf

Throughout the holiday season and into the new year, we give and receive well wishes for health, happiness, and prosperity with the utmost sincerity. Some will even articulate with the common phrase “and in that order.” I tend to believe that the three are strongly connected and that reaching a higher ground in any one area can raise our optimism so profoundly that we can experience an uplift in other areas, as well. So it seems quite right to place prosperity at the top of our wish list, if that’s where it needs to be. And for many of us who are still recovering from our holiday spending, this might be a good time to do just that.

Making that choice will put your intention out to the universe, but why stop there? A crystal grid can amplify your intention with energy that directly resonates with prosperity and attracts like energy in return. Each crystal has its own unique energy signature. When arranged in a geometric pattern, a sacred, harmonic relationship is achieved, and the crystals will work together towards a common goal.

To create a prosperity grid, there are no hard and fast rules — these are only some guidelines to help get you started in five easy steps. Allow intuition to guide you, and, as an added bonus, the more often you work with crystals and grids, the more elevated your intuition will become.

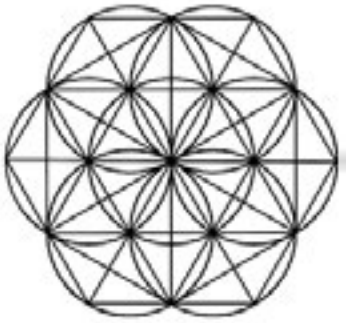
1. Set Your Intention

With all forms of energy work, intention is everything, and perspective matters — “prosperity” and “abundance” can mean different things to each of us. For the sake of simplicity, let’s think of prosperity in the context of wealth and financial well-being, and use that as our intention for the grid.

2. Select Your Grid Pattern

Sacred geometry is a school of thought which holds that every aspect of the natural world, including our human existence, is designed by Divine Intelligence using geometric shapes and patterns. This natural phenomenon can be used to guide the flow of energy within your grid by creating a very precise pattern of “ley lines” for the energy to follow. Think of it as a roadmap, and imagine that each crystal on the grid is a place of interest. The pattern acts as a natural GPS system that helps energy travel between all the crystals by providing the most direct route.

There are many grid patterns to choose from, each with its own purpose. The most familiar one is the Flower of Life (Exhibit A), which holds ancient spiritual value. Embodied within it is the Seed of Life (below).



I prefer the Seed of Life for prosperity work because it contains exactly seven circles, and the number seven is associated with good luck. It’s also a symbol of infinite possibilities, creation, and life itself, which makes it ideal for creating something from nothing (think “rags to riches”), or breathing new life into something that may have stopped growing, such as a bank account. As you continue to experiment with grids, I encourage you to study sacred geometry in greater depth, but for now, let’s use the Seed of Life for our grid. Printable versions can easily be found online, and if you’d like to infuse your grid with some additional color energy, you can print it on colored paper.

3. Select Your Crystals

Using a minimum of three different crystals or stones is recommended, but feel free to use more or less as your intuition guides you. The three stones have a distinct purpose.

A focus stone in the center draws the energy in while concentrating on your intention, amplifies it, and sends it to all the other crystals in the grid. The direction that the energy flows will follow the ley lines in the grid pattern. Only one is needed, and citrine is an ideal choice.

The surrounding way stones receive the energy from the center and further enhance it with their own unique vibration. It's not an exact science, but color rays are believed to be a key contributor. Since green is associated with wealth, abundance, and growth, green crystals make excellent way stones.

For balance, an outer circle with an equal number of desire stones will fine tune the energy, bringing it to the ideal state for manifesting the desired result. Any crystal that you might ordinarily wear or use by itself to achieve a particular goal is a good choice, regardless of color.

Should you decide to embellish your grid with additional crystals, it's not necessary to have six of everything. But to maintain equilibrium, I do recommend working with numbers that "fit" mathematically, such as increments of three. They should also be chosen based on what they can bring to the grid to help further your intention by their own merit. For example, if you're aware of something in particular that's blocking you from prosperity, you might add an extra set of crystals that can remedy this. Using quartz points along the ley lines of the grid is also a great way to accelerate and direct the energy flow.

Suggestions for crystals that promote prosperity can be found on the next page. This is by no means a complete list, but they're fairly common and easy to find. Crazy Wisdom has an excellent selection.

Before you move on, you'll need a few more things: a wand, smudge, and one or more candles. The wand will be used to activate the grid by channeling and directing the energy. It can be any wand of your choosing. A large clear quartz or selenite point will work nicely and fit comfortably in your hand. As an alternative, a pendulum or athame are also good options.

4. Consecrate

Once you've collected your elements together, perform your own blessing over the area, the crystals, and yourself. Smudging with sage will cleanse any stagnant or negative energy from all, including yourself. If the smoke bothers you, use a hydrosol spray instead. If the aroma of sage doesn't appeal to you, choose something else with cleansing or purifying properties. The important thing is that you perform this step; how you perform it is entirely up to you.

It's equally important to consecrate with intent. As you're smudging, remain focused on your desire for prosperity, and ask for Divine guidance and protection. In your own way, invoke the aid of your angels or spirit guides, and ask your crystals to awaken their powers to serve your highest good.

5. Create & Activate

Now you're ready to create your grid. Remember to stay focused on your intent as you set each crystal in place. Here again, you can reflect on the specific contribution that you would like each crystal to make. Place the focus stone in the middle first, followed by the way stones, and then the desire stones. By working outward from the center, your grid is physically growing as you create it — and so is the energy. If you have any additional crystals, save them for last. Once the grid is complete, you're ready to activate it.

With your wand in hand, start by bringing in the white light of universal love and protection. Visualize it surrounding you and your grid. Direct your full attention on the focus stone in the center, and imagine a brilliant white light radiating from it like a starburst. Once you can see this in your mind's eye, use your wand to direct the light towards all the other crystals by drawing ley lines between all of them. In other words, use your wand to connect all the dots, while visualizing beams of light bonding the crystals together until every one of them is connected to all the others.

Infuse the grid with your intent one last time. Take in a long, deep breath, and as you exhale slowly, "will" your own energy into the grid and send your intent for prosperity out into the universe. Do this three times, and give thanks.

Finally, place your candle(s) anywhere near the grid, and light them. Illuminating your grid is a nice ceremonial touch that symbolizes the white light of universal love and protection. There's no set amount of time for burning the candles, but the longer you keep the grid lighted, the better. So when you put the candles out, you can switch to battery operated candles or a small lamp.

The energy of the grid will be sustained for as long as it remains undisturbed, but the first three days are the strongest. You can continue to add more energy to the grid by meditating, white lighting, re-activating, or adding more crystals. But it will always be strongest immediately after the first activation.

There are many ways to manifest prosperity. Gridding with crystals is one of the easiest to learn and is fairly inexpensive. So I hope you'll consider giving it a try. Whether you long for a life of luxury, or you believe that life itself is the greatest luxury one can have, all of us can benefit from abundance in our lives. May prosperity be one of many blessings you enjoy in the year to come.

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# The Crazy Wisdom weekly Calendar

## Channeling

**Remembering Wholeness via Zoom • December 20 • 2 p.m. •** Energy sharing (darshan) with The Mother channeled through Barbara Brodsky. Darshan is an event in conscousness. The powerful energy of The Mother gets transmuted as she looks directly at each person through the camera. Number of participants limited; register early. For more information email om@deepspring.org or visit deepspring.org.

## Online Workshops

**Weekly Zohar (The Book of Radiance) Study • December 20 • 8 p.m. •** Explore the hidden and mystical meanings concealed in the Old Testament (Torah); deepen your spiritual knowledge, awareness, consciousness, and connection. For more information call Karen Greenberg at (734) 417-9511 or email krngrnbg@gmail.com, or visit their website, clair-ascension.com.

**D.O.V.E. Divine Original Vibration Embodiment System Training (Karen Greenberg's Clair-Ascension Kabbalistic Balance) • December 18 • 10 a.m. •** After studying D.O.V.E. System manual, learning to identify and repattern client's limiting beliefs, thoughts, attitudes, and patterns, and assisting client in expressing any commensurate low-vibrational emotions, through the Tree of Life, learn to Kabbalistically balance client's energy via art, movement, music, toning, sound, aromatherapy, gemstones, sacred symbols, connecting with G-D, Archangels, Angels, Masters of Light, trees, powerful Archetypes, and more. For more information call Karen Greenberg at (734) 417-9511 or email krngrnbg@gmail.com, or visit their website, clair-ascension.com.

Get your calendar listings in by Monday morning at 10 A.M. for the next Crazy Wisdom Weekly Issue!
Send your listing in here.

coop deals
fresh deals
PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP
NATURAL FOODS MARKET & DELI
Stop in or use Contactless Curbside Pickup!
Place your order on-line at www.peoplesfood.coop
$5 OFF
WITH YOUR NEXT PURCHASE OF $25 OR MORE
COUPON IS GOOD FOR IN-STORE VISIT ONLY
Must present coupon at the time of purchase. No other discounts apply. Gift cards, case purchases, Co-op cash card, beer or wine cannot be used with purchase. Limit one offer per customer, one coupon per transaction.
OFFER EXPIRES 12/31/2020 Cashiers write transaction total: _____
COVID-19 Grocery Shopping Tips:
Shop alone, if possible
Wear a mask when you shop
Use sanitizing wipes to wipe down carts
Maintain social distance 6 ft apart
Use hand sanitizer to disinfect your hands before and after shopping

## Calendar Editor Wanted

The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal is looking for a detail-oriented calendar editor, a person who is interested in the holistic and conscious living subjects covered in our publication.

The Journal is published three times a year, and it includes a community calendar for our readership – somewhere between 300 and 550 listings per issue. We are looking for someone who has an interest in local events, knows how to use Google sheets and forms, is familiar with Word, and is a good proofreader. You must own your own computer as this is a work-from-home position, and you must be local to the Ann Arbor area.

If you are a team player and are interested in this position, please email a letter of interest and a resume with relevant work experience to Jennifer@crazywisdom.net.

(This job pays reasonably well, but it is a very part-time position.)

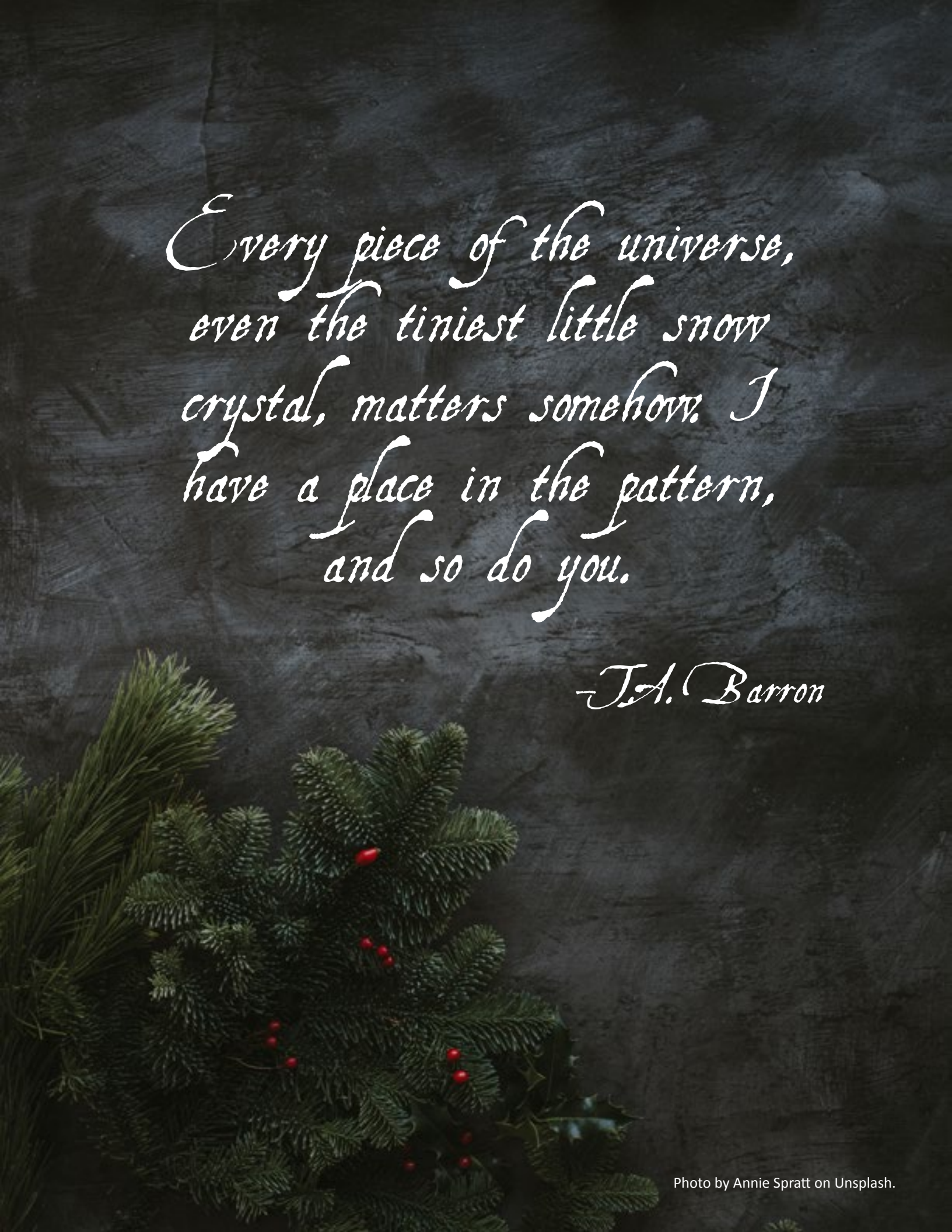
Every piece of the universe,
even the tiniest little snow
crystal, matters somehow. I
have a place in the pattern,
and so do you.
-J.A. Barron

Photo by Annie Spratt on Unsplash.